

Tai Manuscripts and Early Printed Books at the Library of Congress

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ABSTRACT—This article provides a comprehensive survey of Tai manuscripts held at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., USA. New items in the collection are highlighted. Some sense of the scope of the collection is also provided. The collection represents an important resource for researchers and the scholarly community. More importantly, it is a vital historical repository of the varied, but interrelated textual traditions and mental worlds of the Tai peoples.

Introduction

There are over 100 manuscripts in the Tai collection held at the Library of Congress Asia Division including many fine examples of illuminated or “painted” manuscripts. There are also rare early printed books from the 19th century documenting the emergence of printing. The oldest dated manuscript in the collection is an Old Lao manuscript dated 1194 of the lesser era, which corresponds roughly to 1832 in the Gregorian calendar. This collection documents a literate culture which has existed for centuries, but which still remains poorly known in the West. To the degree that this is due to a lack of original sources this collection contributes to making the Tai peoples of mainland Southeast Asia better known, and in their own unmediated words.

The Tai manuscripts and early printed books of this collection are written in a variety of languages: Thai, Lao, Kham Mư̄ang (Northern Thai), Shan, Tai Khoēn and Pāli. Besides Thai and Lao, the texts are written in a number of modern and esoteric scripts including Thai, Lao, Old Lao, Khōm and various forms of Tham. Almost all Tai peoples use more than one script. As a result, the range of the collection affords the opportunity for comparative philological studies. This linguistic diversity should not obscure the fact that all of these languages are closely related. Every language except Pāli is considered part of the Southwestern Tai branch of the Tai Kadai language family. For that reason, this collection is called “Tai” to denote all the related peoples rather than any one people.

Texts exemplify the power of the written word. They have the unique power to preserve the distinctive mental world of a person and people. Texts are often the only record of a particular worldview which has receded in the passage of time. Texts that can be dated hold the potential to capture pivotal moments in history that have shaped

the present. I would argue the texts making up this collection do that for the Tai peoples of mainland Southeast Asia.

This collection is divided into three broad categories: Siamese (or central Thai); Lao and Northern Thai (including Shan and Tai Khoēn); and finally Isan, the northeast region of modern Thailand. Each grouping is further broken down into subcategories such as Buddhism, literature, or astrology. More will be said about each category below.

In this article items in the collection are listed chronologically where possible. In cases where there is no date found in the text this will be indicated as “n.d.” Dates of publication are given in either the Buddhist era or the lesser era with the Western equivalent. In cases where there is no author or copyist associated with a text it will be listed as “anonymous”. Tai manuscripts are by their nature very idiosyncratic. They were written for a particular community in which the creator of the text would have been obvious. As for transcription, this article (and corresponding catalog entries) adheres to the Library of Congress Romanization tables for Lao, Thai and Shan.

Provenance for every manuscript in the collection is not known. Some manuscripts were gifts of individuals while others were acquired by the Library of Congress overseas acquisition offices. Several manuscripts were donated by Laurence Mus Rimer and J. Thomas Rimer. These donations came from the personal libraries of the famous Vietnam and Cham scholar Paul Mus and the pioneering Khmer scholar Suzanne Karpelès.

Siamese manuscripts and an early printed book

The Siamese manuscripts in this part of the collection come from an area known for centuries as สยาม (Sayām); now designated as central Thailand.¹ There are twenty-six manuscripts, several cloths and one early printed book in this part of the collection. They are all written in Thai and Pāli languages. The early printed book and most of these manuscripts were written in the Thai script which achieved its modern form by the 19th century. But several manuscripts were written in the Khōm script, which is closely related to the Khmer script.²

The Thai script and language were heavily influenced by Khmer, which the Siamese appropriated over time and modified to represent the sounds of their own language. Khōm script was borrowed from Cambodia and used to write Buddhist manuscripts. None of the manuscripts in the collection are written in the thick-lettered ornamental style of Khōm script typical of the 18th century, but are instead written in the thin-lettered Khōm style, thus placing these manuscripts firmly in the 19th century or later.³

¹ For a recent study of Siamese manuscripts, see the special issue of the journal *Manuscript Studies* (Vol 2, Nr. 1, 2017). On the Buddhist manuscript tradition in general, see Stephen C. Berkwitz, Juliane Schober and Claudia Brown, eds., *Buddhist Manuscript Cultures: Knowledge, Ritual, and Art* (London: Routledge, 2009).

² For an excellent guide to the Khōm (and Tham) script, see Kannikā Wimonkasēm, *Tamrā rīan ‘aksōn Thai bōrān: ‘aksōn Khōm Thai, ‘aksōn tham Lānnā, ‘aksōn tham ‘Isān* (Bangkok: Phāk Wichā Phāsā Tawan’ōk, Khana Bōrānnakhadī, Mahāwitthayālai Sinlapākōn, 2552 [2009]). This was an extremely valuable resource for this project.

³ Henry Ginsburg, *Thai Manuscript Painting* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1989), p. 11.

Khōm was also used for astrological and *yantra* manuscripts because the script was viewed as ancient and so an appropriate vehicle for material that was spiritually potent.

Unlike other parts of the collection nearly all these manuscripts are folding or concertina style manuscripts with paper made from the inner bark of the *khoi* (*streblus asper*) bush. These books are thus called *samut khoi* in Thai. Siamese palm leaf manuscripts were usually reserved for Buddhist texts often in Pāli and that is true of the manuscripts in this part of the collection. The tradition of palm leaf manuscripts ultimately traces back to India and was retained specifically for the sacred texts of India. Folding manuscripts on the other hand have been used for a variety of topics, from government records and literature to astrology and medical treatises.

Of the Buddhist manuscripts in this part of the collection the most important would be the story of Phra Mālai, which was a very popular tale in 19th century Siam.⁴ It was especially popular at funerals given the nature of the story, but it was also important for its lengthy description of the future Buddha Maitreya. The Phra Mālai manuscript in this collection includes a very fine illustration of Maitreya (พระศรีอริยเมตไตรย, พระศรีอาริย์) approaching Phra Mālai as he converses with Indra and Brahma in a Buddhist heaven. There is also a manuscript with illustrations of the Vessantara Jātaka, the penultimate past life of the Buddha before being reborn as Siddhartha Gautama. Unlike the Phra Mālai illuminated manuscript, manuscripts containing Jātaka illustrations are always accompanied by a different text that is unrelated to the Vessantara Jātaka. The illustrations are “complementing or supplementing” the written text and stand on their own.⁵

Astrology treatises are the largest part of this group of manuscripts. They were a popular form of manuscript in Siam in part because they attempted to deal with the unknown. Astrology treatises were recopied many times due to being heavily used. The authority on these documents, Quaritch Wales, stated there were nearly 1,000 such manuscripts held at the Thai National Library.⁶ They are the next most popular subject after Buddhism. The astrology manuscripts in this collection include manuals for fortune tellers which used the month and year a person was born in to explain a person’s characteristics and foretell what their life prospects would be. These manuscripts utilized the Chinese zodiac (rat, ox, tiger, hare, large serpent or dragon, small serpent, horse, goat, monkey, cock, dog and pig) and the Chinese five elements (water, earth, wood, fire, metal).⁷ In some manuscripts the zodiac is illustrated with four forms of the relevant animal below a mascot and tree for the year. The collection also includes a manual for drawing protective diagrams (*yantra*) and spells (*mantra*) as well as examples of cloths

⁴ Bonnie Brereton, *Thai tellings of Phra Malai: texts and rituals concerning a popular Buddhist saint* (Tempe, AZ: Arizona State University, 1995).

⁵ Naomi Appleton, Sarah Shaw and Toshiya Unebe, *Illuminating the Life of the Buddha: An Illustrated Chanting Book from Eighteen-Century Siam* (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 2013), p. 7.

⁶ Henry Ginsburg, *Thai Art and Culture: Historic Manuscripts from Western Collections* (London: The British Library, 2000), p. 120.

⁷ Ginsburg, *Thai Manuscript Painting*, p. 22, p. 26.

with the same type of diagrams and spells.⁸ One example of a more modern fortune telling manual is a manuscript dating to 1931.

Medical treatises can be considered as a subset of astrological manuscripts. Disease was identified not just by where on the body it manifested, but also what time of year it appeared and even one's geographic location when contracting the disease; all were essential to diagnosis and prognosis in 19th century Siam. Thai medicine was influenced by Chinese, Indian and Arab medicine. Premodern Thai etiology ascribed disease to phenomena not unlike the four humors of early Western medicine. The collection contains several manuals which contain extensive illustrations for identifying and treating various diseases of the skin, eyes and body. Other medical treatises treat conditions via pressure points similar to Japanese Shiatsu or Chinese acupuncture.

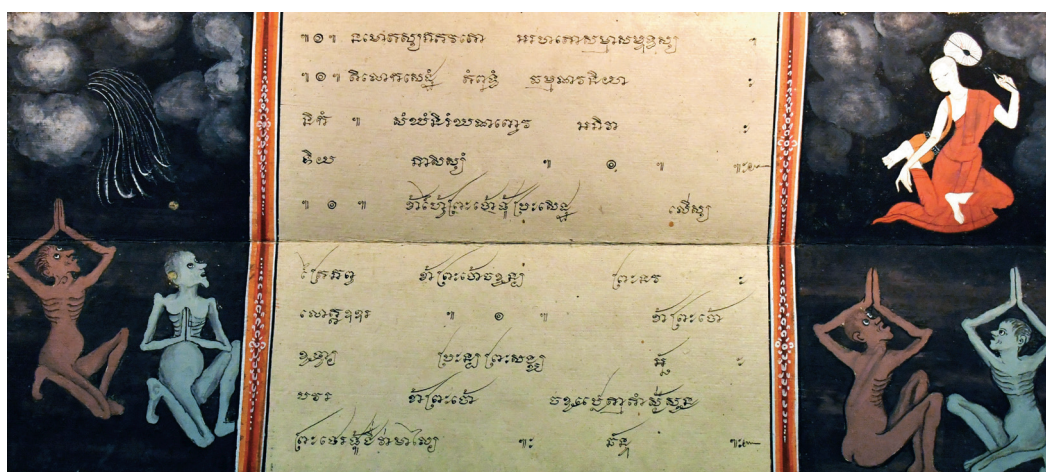


Figure 1. Phra Mālāi's visiting those suffering in a Buddhist hell; c 19th century (Buddhism no.2). (Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

Thai literature was written only in verse before the 19th century.⁹ Prose was not taken seriously until around 1850. The earliest works of Thai literature were all by anonymous authors. The works of named authors only began to appear in the 17th century. Sunthōn Phū is the most famous author from the first half of the 19th century. Among other works between 1822 and 1844 he wrote the epic of Phra 'Aphai Manī about the heroic adventures of the title character Prince 'Aphai Manī. It is the longest poem in the Thai language, notable for the simple language used, distinct from courtly poetry otherwise used in literature of this type.

Finally, the Siamese group includes one early but valuable printed book. There is no indication of where or when it was printed, but it might be from the first half of the 19th century. The text consists of a short English-Thai dictionary starting with the letters and numbers of the Thai language. It ends with a word list of terms useful for Western traders. The organization of the text indicates it was written by an individual

⁸ Jana Igunma, "Aksoon Khoom: Khmer Heritage in Thai and Lao Manuscript Cultures" *Tai Culture* vol. 23, p. 4.

⁹ Nidhi Eoseewong, *Pen and Sail: literature and history in early Bangkok including the history of Bangkok in the chronicles of Ayutthaya* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2005).

with some training in linguistics. Siamese books began to be printed by Westerners at Serampore near Calcutta in 1819 and then at Singapore by 1823.¹⁰ The missionary Dan Beach Bradley brought printing to Bangkok in 1836. This book could have been made in any of those places, but perhaps in British India by some Orientalists with knowledge of linguistics.

Many manuscripts in this part of the collection are undated. It is possible to undertake further tests to narrow the range of potential dates by identifying the individual dyes and material used in the making of the manuscript.¹¹ Without further analysis one can estimate that most are likely from the 19th or early 20th century. It would be very unlikely that any manuscript would be from before the late 18th century since the Burmese invasion of Ayutthaya in 1767 destroyed almost all manuscripts composed up to that time.

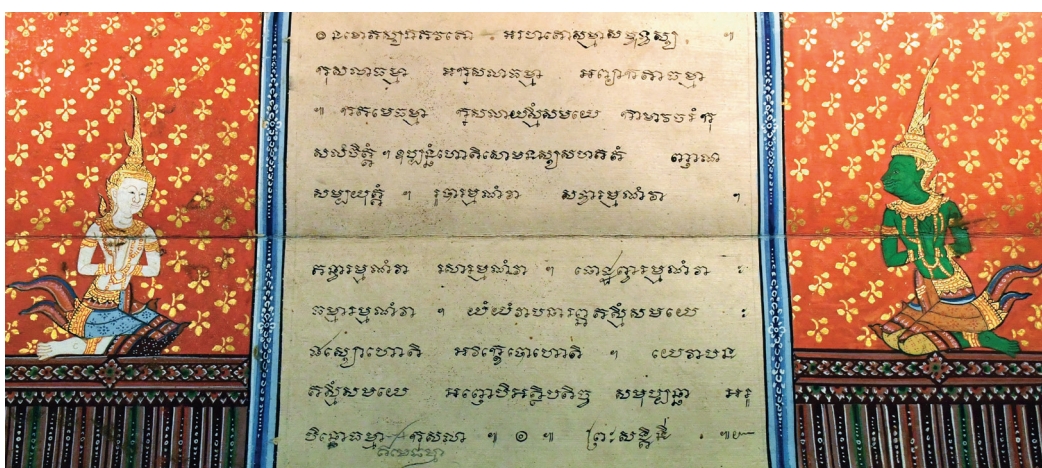


Figure 2. Probably Brahma (left) and Indra (right) in a Siamese manuscript of Phra Mālai; c. 19th century (Buddhism no. 3). (Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

Buddhism

1. *Phrathammathētsanā khamphī Thai khōng Mahāmakutrāṭchawitthayālai nai phrabōrommarāchūpatham*; Compilation of religious discourses by contemporary monks; Buddhist University of Thailand; 2483-2489 [1940-1945]; 25 vol.; 5 x 52 cm; folding mss.; 5 lines; in Thai and Pāli
2. *Phra Mālai*; Illuminated story of Phra Mālai; anonymous; n.d.; 46 ff.; 65 x 14 cm; folding mss.; 5 lines; Thai and Pāli in Thai Khōm script
3. *Phra Mālai*; Illuminated story of Phra Mālai; anonymous; n.d.; 102 ff.; 68 x 15 cm; folding mss.; 5 lines; Thai and Pāli in Thai Khōm script
4. Untitled Mss.; Illuminated Buddhist manuscript with illustrations of Vessantara Jātaka; anonymous; n.d.; 30 ff.; 49 x 10 cm; folding mss.; 5 lines; Pāli in Thai Khōm script

¹⁰ Ginsburg, *Thai Art and Culture*, p. 40.

¹¹ Jo-Fan Huang, "A Technical Examination of 7 Thai Manuscripts in the 18th, 19th, and 20th Centuries" 2006. Available online: http://cool.conservation-us.org/anagpic/2006pdf/2006ANAGPIC_Huang.pdf (accessed 1 August 2019).

5. *Phrakangkā Witrani*; The renunciation of the venerable one who wonders or doubts; anonymous; n.d.; 4 vol.; 57 x 5 cm; palm leaf mss.; 5 lines; Pāli in Thai Khōm script
6. *Phra Milinthapanhā*; Discussion between King Milinda and the Buddhist sage Nāgasena; anonymous; n.d.; 517 ff. 17 vol.; 53 x 4 cm; palm leaf mss.; 5 lines; Pāli in Thai Khōm script

Astrology

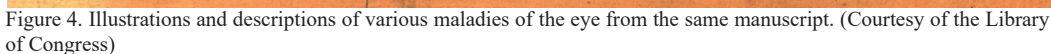
1. *Phra Phuttha Sakarāt 2474 Pī Mamētrīsok 'atikamāt*; Thai horoscope for 1931, year of the goat; anonymous; 2474 [1931]; 9 ff.; 27 x 10 cm; folding mss.; varies; in Thai
2. *Tamrā Mō Dū*; Commentary on Thai astrology with illustrations and figures; anonymous; n.d.; 33 ff.; 35 x 11 cm; folding mss.; 5-7 lines; in Thai
3. *Nōng rak cāophī 'āi*; collection of love charms and spells from old Pāli with occult charts; anonymous; n.d.; 75 ff.; 13 x 19 cm; folding mss.; varies; Thai and Pāli in Thai script with Thom Khōm
4. Untitled Mss.; Ancient Thai horoscope; anonymous; n.d.; 45 ff.; 36 x 25 cm; folding mss.; 6-7 lines; in Thai
5. Untitled Mss.; Illustrations of twelve animals of zodiac with characteristics of people born in each respective year; anonymous; n.d.; 21 ff.; 34 x 10 cm; folding mss.; varies; in Thai
6. Untitled Mss.; Illustrations of different kinds of Siamese cats explaining which are good or bad luck for the owner; anonymous; n.d.; 12 ff.; 31 x 11 cm; folding mss.; 4 lines; in Thai

Protective diagrams

1. *Phra Samut Yan*; Manual of protective diagrams and spells to protect from all danger and weapons or to avoid war; anonymous; n.d.; 31 ff.; 49 x 19 cm; folding mss.; varies; in Thai and Pāli with Thai and Khōm script.
2. Untitled; various protective diagrams and spells; anonymous; n.d.; 27 cm; printed on cloth; varies; in Thai and Pali with Thai and Khōm script.

Medical astrology

1. *Tamrap Mō Mūat*; Illustrations of massages with accompanying text; anonymous; 2457 [1914]; 39 ff.; 36 x 11 cm; folding mss.; varies; in Thai
2. *Thritsadi kānphēt phēn Thai: samutthānawinitchai*; Medical astrology calendar; Phennaphā Sapcharoen, 'Itsarā Thayāhathai; [1994]; 32 cm; printed on cloth; varies; in Thai
3. Untitled Mss.; Medical treatise on use of pressure points to cure various conditions; anonymous; n.d.; 13 ff.; 35 x 12 cm; folding mss.; 5 lines; in Thai
4. Untitled Mss.; Medical treatise showing disease etiology and treatment; anonymous; n.d.; 33 ff.; 35 x 12 cm; folding mss.; 6-8 lines; in Thai
5. Untitled Mss.; Medical treatise on skin diseases with illustrations; anonymous; n.d.; 20 ff.; 36 x 12 cm; folding mss.; 5 lines; in Thai



1. *Phra 'Aphaimani*; Epic poem of the mythic bard Prince 'Aphai Manī; Sunthōn Phū; n.d.; 53 ff.; 11 x 34 cm; folding mss.; 4 lines; in Thai
2. *Nā Pāi Lēm Sām*; Story about a royal family separated when their boat sank on an ocean voyage; anonymous; n.d.; 29 ff.; 34 x 10 cm; folding mss.; 3 lines; in Thai
3. *Nangsū Sipsōṅ Līap*; Thai poem; anonymous; n.d.; 28 ff.; 33 x 10 cm; folding mss.; 4 lines; in Thai
4. *Namō khā c̣ha wai*; Thai literature; anonymous; n.d.; 73 ff. 2 vol.; 12 x 35 cm; folding mss.; 5 lines;
5. *Khā Khōi 'Acha sī*; Reader in yānī-style verse-form for teaching primary-school children; anonymous; n.d.; 52 ff.; 12 x 35 cm; folding mss.; 4 lines; in Thai

6. Untitled Mss.; Travel poem; anonymous; n.d.; 23 ff.; 34 x 11 cm; folding mss.; 5 lines; in Thai

Royal processions

1. *Krabūan phayuhayātrā sathonlamāk samai Somdet Phra Nārāi Mahārāt : ĉhamlōng ĉhāk tonchabap nangsū Samut Thai khōng Hōsamut hēng Chāt*; Illustrated royal land procession of King Nārāi; Thai Ministry of Education, Arts department; 2530 [1987]; 51 ff.; 38 x 8 cm; folding mss.; varies; in Thai
2. *Riu krabūan hē phayuhayātrā thāng chonlamāk Somdet Phra Nārāi Mahārāt : ĉhamlōng ĉhāk tonchabap nangsū Samut Thai khōng Hōsamut hēng Chāt*; Illustrated royal water procession of King Nārāi; Thai Ministry of Education, Arts department; 2530 [1987]; 44 ff.; 30 x 10 cm; folding mss.; varies; in Thai

An early printed book

1. *Siamese numerals, alphabet & alphabetic combinations, etc.*; Early English-Thai dictionary with phrases useful for Western traders; anonymous; n.d.; 32 p.; 22 cm; early printed book; varies; in Thai and English

Lao and Northern Thai manuscripts and an early printed book

The Lao and Northern Thai manuscripts constitute a discrete group of manuscripts in the collection. There are twelve manuscripts and one early printed book in this part of the collection which are composed in several scripts: Lao, Old Lao and varieties of Tham. They are written in a variety of languages: Lao, Kham Mūang (Northern Thai), Shan, Tai Khoēn and Pāli, representing the most linguistic diversity in the collection. Even though these manuscripts are written in several different, albeit related, languages they all were produced within a common intellectual milieu facilitated by the shared use of the Tham (Dhamma) script. Use of a single script enabled sustained intellectual and cultural contact among these northern Tai peoples for centuries. It also promoted cultural borrowing and intercultural exchanges that lend a wider coherence to this area of northern Tai cities and peoples in mainland Southeast Asia along the borders of China.¹² The northern Tai peoples belong to a unique cultural and intellectual world described by Volker Grabowsky as the “Dham [Tham] Script Cultural Zone” centered on Chiang Mai, Nan, Luang Prabang, Phrae, Chiang Rai, Xieng Hung, Kengtung, Vientiane, and (belatedly) Champassak.¹³ One might include Taunggyi as well. This cultural world was more influenced by Mon and Burmese than Khmer or Siamese. It also maintained

¹² There have been some valuable studies of the Tai-China border area from Chinese sources. See for example C. Patterson Giersch, *Asian Borderlands: The Transformation of Qing China's Yunnan Frontier* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006). There is also a fascinating study of an early Tai polity on the Sino-Viet border: James Anderson, *The Rebel Den of Nung Tri Cao: Loyalty and Identity along the Sino-Vietnamese frontier* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007).

¹³ Volker Grabowsky, Keynote Address, Third International Conference on Lao Studies, Khon Kaen, Thailand, June 2010.

close cultural and economic contacts with China via Yunnan and Guangxi provinces.¹⁴ Intriguingly, before the 20th century the Siamese referred to the whole area as “Lao.”

Since the emergence of the nation state in this part of Asia the northern Tai peoples have been divided and separated from each other by modern borders.¹⁵ This part of the collection is thus transnational in nature and is shared with related peoples across the border in China like the Tai Lue of Sipsongpanna (Xishuangbanna).¹⁶ As a result of being at the margins of modern nations, in most cases northern Tai manuscripts have only recently been systemically inventoried, collected, preserved and studied, especially in northern Thailand and Laos.¹⁷ For more substantial treatments of Lao manuscript culture than can be provided in this brief article one may refer to recent work by Bounleuth Sengsoulin.¹⁸

The historical development of this area may be summarized briefly as follows. From the 14th to the 16th century Chiang Mai was the major center of intellectual and textual production of Pāli and Tai Buddhist and other manuscripts (e.g. historical chronicles written in the Mahāvamsa tradition of Sri Lanka) in Tham and Fak Kham scripts.¹⁹ When Chiang Mai was invaded by Burma (Myanmar) in 1558 much of this intellectual production moved to Laos, especially Vientiane and Luang Prabang where a unique Lao script had developed by 1530.²⁰ By the mid-17th century European travelers reported that Vientiane was at the center of a thriving intellectual culture which attracted monks from as far as Burma, Siam and Sipsongpanna. By the 19th century when Chiang Mai

¹⁴ For one innovative study of the Chinese Tai borderlands, see Foon Ming Liew-Herres and Volker Grabowsky, *Lan Na in Chinese Historiography: Sino-Tai Relations as Reflected in the Yuan and Ming Sources (13th to 17th Centuries)* (Bangkok: Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, 2008).

¹⁵ For the case of a Tai principality caught between British and French colonialism, see Volker Grabowsky, “Introduction to the History of Muang Sing (Laos) prior to the French Rule: The fate of a Lu Principality,” *Bulletin de l'Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient*, 86 (1999). See also Andrew Walker, “Borders in Motion on the Upper-Mekong: Siam and France in the 1890s” in Yves Goudinea and Michel Lorrillard (eds.), *New Research on Laos* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2009).

¹⁶ Foon Ming Liew-Herres, Volker Grabowsky and Renoo Wichasin, *Chronicle of Sipsong Panna: History and Society of a Tai Lu Kingdom, Twelfth to Twentieth Century* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2012).

¹⁷ Much of this work has been digitized and made available online. For Laos, see the Digital Library of Lao Manuscripts: www.laomanuscripts.net; for Northern Thailand, see the Digital Library of Northern Thai Manuscripts: www.lannamanuscripts.net. David Wharton and Harold Hundis have been at the forefront of these efforts for many years doing invaluable work to preserve many manuscripts that would otherwise be lost.

¹⁸ Bounleuth Sengsoulin, “Buddhist Monks and their Search for Knowledge: an examination of the personal collection of manuscripts of Phra Khamchan Virachitto (1920-2007), Abbot of Vat Saen Sukharam, Luang Prabang,” (Ph.D. diss., University of Hamburg, 2016). See also David Wharton, “Language, Orthography and Buddhist Manuscript Culture of the Tai Neua – an apocryphal jataka text in Mueang Sing, Laos” (Ph.D. diss., Universität Passau, 2017). For an excellent treatment of many aspects of Lao manuscript culture, see Bounleuth Sengsoulin, “The Manuscript Collection of Abbot Sathu Nyai Khamchan at the Monastery of Vat Saen Sukharama (Luang Prabang, Laos)” *Manuscript Cultures* no. 8, 2015.

¹⁹ On Chiang Mai, see Daniel Veidlinger, *Spreading the Dhamma: Writing, Orality and Textual Transmission in Buddhist Northern Thailand* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2006). On the Mahāvamsa tradition, see the works of Stephen C. Berkwitz.

²⁰ Michel Lorrillard, “Scripts and History: The Case of Laos” in Masao Kashinaga, ed., *Written Cultures in Mainland Southeast Asia* (Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2009).

was rebuilt after years of war it received many copied manuscripts from Luang Prabang.²¹ Nan did the same in circa 1840 and again in the 1860s and 1870s.²² The Tai Khoēn, and Shan to an extent, were part of this world too given that they also used the Tham script.

Manuscripts from the northern Thai, Lao, Tai Khoēn, and Shan often do not list any author, copyist or date or even the place of composition. This makes it difficult to know when and where most manuscripts were produced. Moreover, manuscripts did not remain in one place but were taken to new locations at various points in time.²³ One cannot assume the place a manuscript was found in the present was where it was originally created, further obscuring its origins. In some cases one can find such information within a colophon somewhere in the manuscript, including even the patron who sponsored the copying of the manuscript. Some manuscripts contain this while others do not. Where a manuscript does have a colophon it will be noted in the description of the manuscript. All manuscripts in this part of the collection were composed in the traditional way as opposed to the modern, printed manuscripts of the Isan collection. Even manuscripts made more recently in Laos in the 1970s were still made in the traditional way, speaking to the enduring nature of the tradition in some places. Whether the manuscripts from Laos composed in 1974 and 1975 speak to the fall of the Royal Lao Government is an open question.

In the library collection there are actually more manuscripts written in the Old Lao (ລາວບູຮານ) script than in the Tham script. One finds here many great works of Lao Literature like Thāo Kālākēt or Phravētsandōn, which are also in the Isan collection (see below), offering the potential for comparative study. One sign of Mon and Burmese influence on this group of manuscripts is the use of the lesser era (Chulasakarat) dating system in some manuscripts.²⁴ This calendar dates back to an ancient Pyu settlement in Burma and was used by the kingdoms of Pagan (Bagan), Sukhothai, Lan Na, Ayutthaya and Lan Xang as well as other Tai states. It begins on 22 March 638. The two works of Old Lao literature which do not have a date might be from the 19th century, but without a colophon one cannot be certain who created it, when, or where.

This group also contains one of the most remarkable texts in the collection. The early printed book entitled “Letters from Silōm, Gift from foreign lands: flower of (my) parents” (หนังสือสี่โล่มปากแต่เมืองนอกมาลาฟอแลแม) was printed in Tham script and may well be the earliest example of a northern Thai text printed using Western methods. It is well known that the America missionary Dan Beach Bradley introduced Western printing to Bangkok in 1836, but the history of Western printing in Chiang Mai is less documented. The title page of the work states it was printed in Chiang Mai (at บ้านวังสิงขร) in 1892. The year 1892 is the same year the American

²¹ Justin McDaniel, “Notes on the Lao influence on Northern Thai Buddhist Literature,” in K. Nettavong, D. Kanlaya, D. Wharton, and K. Yangnouvong, eds., *The Literary Heritage of Laos: Preservation, Dissemination and Research Perspectives* (Vientiane: National Library of Laos, 2005).

²² David Wyatt, *Reading Thai Murals* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2003), p. 12, p. 20.

²³ Akiko Iijima, “A Historical Approach to the Palm-Leaf Manuscripts Preserved in Wat Mahathat, Yasothorn (Thailand),” in K. Nettavong, D. Kanlaya, D. Wharton, and K. Yangnouvong, eds., *The Literary Heritage of Laos: Preservation, Dissemination and Research Perspectives* (Vientiane: National Library of Laos, 2005).

²⁴ J.C. Eade, *The Calendrical Systems of Mainland South-East Asia* (Leiden: Brill, 1995).

Presbyterian Mission opened the Chiang Mai Mission Press.²⁵ Given the textual content, the signature inscribed on the first page and the date of the work it can be identified as a Presbyterian missionary text, and one of the first Western books printed in Chiang Mai.

The work tells the story of Sīlōm who travels to America and Europe. He writes home to his parents about the modern marvels he sees in California and elsewhere. By the end of the text he has become converted to Christianity (p. 82) referring to “my Lord Jesus” (พระเยซูเจ้าเรา). The text is written as a travelogue in the first-person perspective as a series of twenty-four letters that Sīlōm wrote home to his parents. It also introduces Western concepts such as the notion of the world being divided up into five “races” (ชาติ [sic]) distinguishable by physiognomic features such as “[skin] color,” “eyes” and “hair” (pp. 42-43). The way the text is written strongly suggests it was translated from American English (e.g. use of “feet” for measurements).²⁶ The author may in fact be Rev. D.G. Collins who inscribed the front page of the book and was in charge of the Chiang Mai mission press.²⁷ The text is filled with errors suggesting it was a very early attempt in the mission’s translation efforts.²⁸ Another unusual feature of the text is its use of the astrological set of numerals rather than the Tham numerals (perhaps avoided for a perceived association with Buddhism).²⁹ At any rate the use of the Christian calendar to date the work itself points to Western missionaries as the authors. As Church historian Herbert Swanson writes, the mission press published “millions of pages of northern Thai Bibles, tracts and Christian literature,” suggesting this book is an early and rare extant example of one such missionary tract.³⁰

The American Presbyterian Mission spent decades trying to establish a printing press since the 1870s but was only successful in bringing a modern printing press to Chiang Mai in 1892. Use of the first-person perspective, much less the epistolary genre of writing, is a distinctly Western feature of the text that would be unprecedented in northern Thai literature. This book was printed in Tham script but introduced Western styles of writing, thinking and religion to the area in an entirely novel way. The book is

²⁵ Cf. Herbert R. Swanson, “Prelude to Irony: The Princeton Theology and the Practice of American Presbyterian Missions in Northern Siam, 1867-1880” (Ph.D. thesis, Melbourne College of Divinity, Melbourne University, 2003). This source can be accessed online at: <https://www.herbswanson.com>.

²⁶ Another sign of this is the use of Western names for well-known places like Bangkok. That a subject of the Kingdom of Siam would refer to Bangkok this way would be highly unusual. “Bangkok” is commonly known in Thai as กรุงเทพฯ.

²⁷ Collins was still there as late as 1903. See for example Presbyterian Church, *The Sixty-Sixth Annual Report of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America* (New York: Presbyterian Church, 1903), p. 293, p. 298.

²⁸ There are signs the author did not understand basic expressions of the Northern Thai (and Lao and Siamese) language: use of the verb “to come/มา” where it should be “to go/ไป” in a mistaken attempt to follow English usage of the words rather than Thai usage; lack of numerical classifiers; and misspelling of common words (e.g. ไป is written as ไพบ which itself may be an error that arose in the process of transcription).

²⁹ The date of the work on the title page is also written using a neologism likely invented by the missionaries, but which never had any currency in Thai languages.

³⁰ Herbert R. Swanson, “This Heathen People: The Cognitive Sources of American Missionary Westernizing Activities in Northern Siam, 1867-1889” (M.A. thesis, University of Maryland, 1987), chapter one. This source can be accessed online at: [herbswanson.com](https://www.herbswanson.com).

important to the history of ideas in the Tai world, the history of Western influence in the 19th century, the role of Christian missionaries, and the history of printing. It can also be fruitfully compared to the introduction of Western printing to Bangkok in earlier decades.

Finally, there is one example of a Shan manuscript written in circular letters (Lik Tou Moan) in the collection.³¹ At this time it has not been deciphered. There may as yet be additional Shan manuscripts in the Asia Division holdings.

Literature

1. *Lam Nithān Thāo Kālakēt*; Legend of Thāo Kālakēt; anonymous; Chulasakarat 1194 [1832]; 338 ff.; 55 x 5 cm; palm leaf mss.; 4 lines; in Old Lao
a. Note: colophon at end of mss.
2. *Lam Nithān Thāo Kālakēt*; Legend of Thāo Kālakēt; anonymous; Chulasakarat 1200 [1838]; 191 ff.; 54 x 5 cm; palm leaf mss.; 4 lines; in Old Lao
a. Note: colophon at end of mss.
3. *Phravētsandōn sadet kap phranakhōn*; The return of Prince Vessantara in verse; anonymous; 2485 [1942]; 70 ff.; 58 x 4 cm; palm leaf mss.; 4 lines; in Old Lao
a. Note: colophon begins on the top line of the back of folio 54
4. *Phravētsandōn sadet kap phranakhōn*; The return of Prince Vessantara in verse; anonymous; 2485 [1942]; 95 ff.; 58 x 4 cm; palm leaf mss.; 4 lines; in Old Lao
5. *Phravētsandōn sadet kap phranakhōn*; The return of Prince Vessantara in verse; anonymous; 2485 [1942]; 104 ff.; 57 x 4 cm; palm leaf mss.; 4 lines; in Old Lao
6. *Lam Nithān Thāo Kālakēt*; Legend of Thāo Kālakēt; Mōm Lūn; 2517 [1974]; 153 ff.; 57 x 4 cm; palm leaf mss.; 4 lines; in Lao
7. *Nithan Thāo Yī*; Legend of the gentleman born in the Year of the Tiger; anonymous; 2518 [1975]; 45 ff.; 50 x 4 cm; palm leaf mss.; 4 lines; in Lao
a. Note: colophon at start of mss.
8. *Lam Nithān Thāo Linthōng*; Story of Thāo Linthōng; anonymous; n.d.; 278 ff.; 58 x 5 cm; palm leaf mss.; 4 lines; in Old Lao
a. Note: colophon at end of mss. does not include a date
9. Untitled Mss.; Collection of Lao stories; anonymous; n.d.; 225 ff. 2 vol.; 58 x 5 cm; palm leaf mss.; 4 lines; in Old Lao
10. *Phāikhlaō pen tham čhao Suthūn*; Story of Chao Suthūn; anonymous; n.d.; 40 ff. 6 vol.; 40 x 8 cm; folding mss.; in Tai Khoēn

Buddhism

1. Untitled Mss.; Buddhist prophecies; anonymous; n.d.; 9 ff.; 53 x 4 cm; palm leaf mss.; 4 lines; Pāli and Northern Thai in Tham script

An early printed book

1. *Nangsur Sīlōm fāk tē mūang nōk -- mālā phō lā mē*; Epistolary in the first-person perspective about a certain Sīlōm who travels to America and converts to Christianity; anonymous; 1892; 84 p.; 12 x 19 cm; Printed text; varies; in

³¹ Sai Kam Mong, *The History and Development of The Shan Scripts* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2004).

Northern Thai Tham script

- a. Note: inscription on first page of book in English: “Sights (?) in California by a Laos boy.” followed by a signature: “D.G. Collins”

Shan Mss.

1. Un-Deciphered Shan Mss.

Isan manuscripts.

The Isan or northeast region of Thailand is home to a large ethnic Lao community. Since the 1920s printers in the region have been making modern palm leaf manuscripts.³² The library holds fifty-eight manuscripts from the Lūk Sō Thammaphakdī publisher. This publisher has been located at two different addresses in Bangkok (Tanāo Road or Khāosān Road) depending on the time period. The earliest manuscripts are from 1921 (by a different publisher), but many are from the 1960s and 1980s. Over the years different individuals were listed as the publisher: Nāi Som Phūangphakdī in the 1960s and Nāi Bunchūai Hiranawat since the 1980s. Currently the Lūk Sō Thammaphakdī publisher is still in business printing Thai and Lao manuscripts for those wanting to make merit or to own a traditionally-styled manuscript.³³

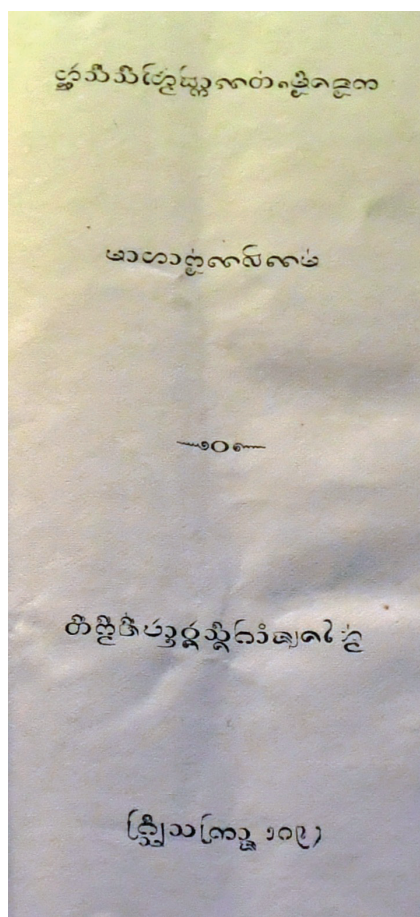


Figure 5. Front cover of a Presbyterian missionary text written in Tham script entitled “Letters from Silom, Gift from foreign lands: Flower of (my) parents,” printed in Chiang Mai in 1892. (Courtesy of the Library of Congress)

While not as old as other examples in the collection these manuscripts are significant in showing how the Tai manuscript tradition evolved in the 20th century. The manuscripts in this part of the collection are more modern, now commercially oriented, but at the same time preserve the tradition for future generations.

What sets these manuscripts apart from the rest of the collection is that they are no longer hand-written by individual scribes but are now machine-printed directly onto the palm leaf. The texts are written in the modern Thai script, rather than older, more esoteric scripts, so that now anybody could read them; one does not need

³² Peter Koret, “Books of Search: The Invention of Traditional Lao Literature as a Subject of Study” in Grant Evans (ed.), *Laos: Culture and Society* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 1999).

³³ According to the current owner, Surapan Puangpakdee, Lūk Sō Thammaphakdī opened in 2472 [1929] and started printing palm leaf manuscripts in 2480 [1937]. Postcards followed in 2496 [1953]. This information was provided by Nhischanun Nunthadsirisorn who personally spoke with the current owner.

specialized knowledge of other scripts. Unlike many manuscripts in this collection many texts now list a compiler or author. This is different from the past when nearly all manuscripts did not name any “author,” much less copyist. In the past there was a widely held view that the author of the text was not the creator or owner of the resulting work, but that they were transmitting universal knowledge from the ancient past.

Nearly all the Isan manuscripts in the collection (twenty-eight of thirty-five) are revisions by the head monk of Ubonrāthchathānī province (พระราชรัตนโพนบไล้เจ้าคณะจังหวัดอุบลราชธานี) in northeast Thailand. The collection also includes two revisions by Mahā Sīlā Vīravong, one of the leading intellectuals of 20th century Laos. According to his autobiography, Sīlā was born in the Isan province Roi Et and sought to become a judge in Thailand before leaving for Laos to join the nascent nationalist movement there. He was an important figure in redefining and modernizing Lao literature at a time when printing began to become more widespread within Laos.

These manuscripts are highly valuable to the academic study of the Isan region of Thailand. The Isan manuscripts include many classics of Lao literature, but also famous works of Thai literature too. This part of the collection also has Siamese manuscripts, many of which were revised by Mahā Pui Sāengchāi of Wat ‘Anongkhārām.³⁴

The edges of many of these manuscripts are marked by red lacquer with gold leaf, making them attractive for prospective buyers as well as protecting them against the humid environment of mainland Southeast Asia. The Lūk Sō Thammaphakkdī manuscripts show how manuscripts were remade in the 20th century into commodities for the market. Some manuscripts actually contain advertisements on the front cover to persuade a person to purchase them. Some also claim to be “copyrighted” which would seem to actually discourage copying. This represents a radical break from the tradition which until modern times only survived by generations of scribes copying out manuscripts by hand. Such copying was a meritorious act conditioned by the social milieu, but it also preserved the manuscripts for future generations. That value system was inexorably altered in the 20th century as demonstrated by this part of the collection.

Isan literature and Buddhism

1. *Phra Pathommasomphōti phāk īsān: phitsadān samnūan ‘ēk 31 parichēt chophōribūn niyom thēt niyom fang nai Prathēt Thai læ Prathēt Lāo*; Life of Gautama Buddha to be heard in Thailand and Laos; anonymous; 2530 [1987]; 382 ff.; 46 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
2. *Sūt yōt muk Lāo rū Phra ‘aphitham chabap khōng Čhangwat ‘Ubonrāthchathānī : niyom sūt sop nai hūan dī mātē būhān*; Sermon on the most high path of the Lao; Phra Thēpphayānawisit (Wat Bōromniwāt); 2530 [1987]; 22 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
3. *Phračhao Līap Lōk Phitsadān 18 kan: samnūan phāk Isān sadāng Phra*

³⁴ This temple (วัดอนงคาราม) was founded in the early Rattanakosin period and is located on the Thonburi side of the Chao Phraya river. It was later renamed by King Mongkut. See Suntharīyā Srīwōṛakan, 80 phra’ārām lūang Krung Thēp Mahā Nakhōn (Bangkok: Samnakphim Than Books, 2007).

- Phutthathamnāi, Phra Phutthabāt, læ Phra Thāt čhedī*; Story of Phračhao Līap Lōk Phitsadān; Mahā Silā Vīravong; 2530 [1987]; 187 ff.; 47x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
4. *Sīeosawāt thammikabandit 20 kan: suphāsīt pračham Phāk Isān sōn lōk sōn tham sōn samai*; Story of Sīeosawāt; Mahā Silā Vīravong; 2530 [1987]; 215 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 5. *Rūang Nāng Tāng ‘ōn: pen khamklōn samnūan phāk isān 12 kan čhop*; Story of Nāng Tāng ‘ōn; anonymous; 2530 [1987]; 118 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 6. *Rūang Sīthon-Manōrā: pen samnūan khamklōn Phāk Isān 8 kan čhop*; Story of Sīthon-Manōrā; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čhangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 65 ff.; 48 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 7. *Rūang Phayā Khankāk: pen samnūan khamklōn Phāk Isān 3 kan čhop*; Story of Phayā Khankāk; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čhangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 25 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 8. *Rūang Thāo Kam Kā Dam: pen khamklōn samnūan ‘ēk phāk ‘Isān 9 kan čhop*; Story of Thāo Kam Kā Dam; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čhangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 72 ff.; 48 x 5 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 9. *Rūang Thāo Hong Hin Phāk Isān: pen samnūan khamklōn Phāk Isān 10 kan čhop*; Story of Thāo Hong Hin; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čhangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 130 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 10. *Rūang Thāo Suriyakhāt-čanthakhāt: pen samnūan khamklōn Phāk Isān 8 kan čhop*; Story of Thāo Suriyakhāt-čanthakhāt; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čhangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 61 ff.; 49 x 5 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 11. *Rūang Kukōng Nōi: pen samnūan ‘ēk khamklōn Phāk Isān 1 kan čhop*; Story of Kukōng Nōi; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čhangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 9 ff.; 48 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 12. *Rūang Thāo Suwannakhīrī: pen khamklōn samnūan phāk ‘Isān 8 kan čhop*; Story of Thāo Suwannakhīrī; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čhangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 83 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 13. *Rūang Thāo Khutthanām: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 8 kan čhop*; Story of Thāo Khutthanām; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čhangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 66 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 14. *Rūang Khun Čāng-Khun Phāen: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 4 kan čhop*; Story of Khun Čāng-Khun Phāen; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čhangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 35 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 15. *Rūang Plabū Thōng pen samnūan khamklōn Phāk Isān 3 kan čhop*; Story of Plabū Thōng; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čhangwat Ubonrāčchathānī;

- 2530 [1987]; 40 ff.; 49 x 5 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
16. *Rūang Nokkračhōk Nōi: pen samnūan khamklōn Phāk Isān 5 kan čhop*; Story of Nokkračhōk Nōi; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 54 ff.; 48 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 17. *Rūang Takkatāen Mōkham: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 4 kan čhop*; Story of Takkatāen Mōkham; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 36 ff.; 46 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 18. *Lam Khun Thūng: pen samnūan ‘ēk khamklōn Phāk Isān 12 kan čhop*; Song of Khun Thūng; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 104 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 19. *Rūang Thāo Suwannaphrām: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 4 kan čhop*; Story of Thāo Suwannaphrām; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 32 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 20. *Rūang Nāng Sipsōng: pen samnūan ‘ēk khamklōn Phāk Isān 10 kan čhop*; Story of Nāng Sipsōng; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 87 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 21. *Rūang Phračhao Sōn Lōk: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 6 kan čhop*; Story of Phračhao Sōn Lōk; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 70 ff.; 48 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; in Lao and Thai
 22. *Rūang Thāo Singkhalō: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 15 kan čhop*; Story of Thāo Singkhalō; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 180 ff.; 49 x 5 cm; printed on palm leaves; in Lao and Thai
 23. *Rūang Thāo Kālakēt: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 22 kan čhop*; Story of Thāo Kālakēt; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 234 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; in Lao and Thai
 24. *Rūang Nokkayāngkhāo (Nokčhao): pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 1 kan čhop*; Story of Nokkayāngkhāo (Nokčhao); Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 19 ff.; 46 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; in Lao and Thai
 25. *Rūang Phayā Kāphūak: pen samnūan ‘ēk khamklōn Phāk Isān 1 kan čhop*; Story of Phayā Kāphūak; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2530 [1987]; 14 ff.; 50 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; in Lao and Thai
 26. *Rūang Mā Yui pen samnūan khamklōn Phāk Isān 7 kan čhop*; Story of Mā Yui; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2532 [1989]; 73 ff.; 48 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 27. *Rūang Sangsinchai pen samnūan khamklōn Phāk Isān 20 kan čhop*; Story of Sang Sin Chai; Phra Rāčcharatnōbon čhao Khana čangwat Ubonrāčchathānī; 2538 [1995]; 176 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 28. *Rūang Thāo Khot-Thāo Sū: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 5 kan čhop*;

- Story of Thāo Khot-Thāo Sūr; Phra Rāṭcharatnōbon ḥao Khana ḥangwat Ubonrāṭchathānī; 2538 [1995]; 57 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
29. *Rūang Thāo Butsabā Kamphrā: pen samnūan khamklōn Phāk Isān 6 kan ḥop*; Story of Thāo Butsabā Kamphrā; Phra Rāṭcharatnōbon ḥao Khana ḥangwat Ubonrāṭchathānī; 2538 [1995]; 50 ff.; 46 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 30. *Rūang Thāo Būa Hōng Būa Hīao: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 3 kan ḥop*; Story of Thāo Būa Hōng Būa Hīao; Phra Rāṭcharatnōbon ḥao Khana ḥangwat Ubonrāṭchathānī; 2539 [1996]; 15 ff. 3 vol.; 42 x 5 cm; printed on folding mss.; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 31. *Rūang Thāo Dāo Rūang: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 4 kan ḥop*; Story of Thāo Dāo Rūang; Phra Rāṭcharatnōbon ḥao Khana ḥangwat Ubonrāṭchathānī; 2539 [1996]; 20 ff. 4 vol.; 42 x 5 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 32. *Rūang Thāo Khūlū Nāng ‘ūa: pen khamklōn samnūan Phāk Isān 3 kan ḥop*; Story of Thāo Khūlū Nāng ‘ūa; Phra Rāṭcharatnōbon ḥao Khana ḥangwat Ubonrāṭchathānī; 2539 [1996]; 15 ff. 3 vol.; 42 x 5 cm; printed on folding mss.; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 33. *Thāo Lin Thōng phāk isān: pen samnūan ‘ēk khōng phāk isān 12 kan ḥop mọ samrap thēt dai thuk ‘ōkāt*; Story of Thāo Lin Thōng; anonymous; n.d.; 129 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 34. *Rūang ḥampa sī ton: pen kham khlōn samnūan phāk isān 28 kan ḥop*; Story of the Champa flower; Phra Rāṭcharatnōbon ḥao Khana ḥangwat Ubonrāṭchathānī; n.d.; 305 ff.; 46 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai
 35. *Lamnāng phomhōm samnūan phāk isān 9 kan ḥop mọ samrap thēt dai thuk ‘ōkāt*; Tale of the Perfumed Hair Lady; anonymous; n.d.; 74 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Lao and Thai

Siamese literature

1. *Phramahāchāt Thētsanā rūr Phramahā Wētsandōn Chādok 13 kan chabap lūang Phrakhāthā khat thāi kan thamnōng Phāk Klāng samrap phra ‘ārām lūang phra ‘ārām rātsadōn niyom thūapai*; Vessantara Jātaka, Siamese version; anonymous; 2532 [1989]; 213 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai

Buddhism (popular texts and sermons)

1. *‘Ānisong Banphachā*; text on Buddhist ordination; anonymous; 2464 [1921]; 13 ff.; 56 x 6 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
2. *‘Ānisong Kathin Thān*; text on Buddhist donation; anonymous; 2464 [1921]; 11 ff.; 56 x 6 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
3. *‘Ānisong Chāpanakit*; text on Buddhist cremation; anonymous; 2464 [1921]; 8 ff.; 56 x 6 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
4. *Phra Sī ‘āri phitsadān 21 kan: sadēng sāra tham lē khōpathibat thāng kāi*

- wāčhā čhai*; Complete account of the future Buddha; Khōi Songbandit; 2504 [1961]; 171 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
5. *Nipphānsūt thētsanā: niyom sāng thēn khunkhā khāo pōn namnom khōng māndā bidā lē yātikā thanglāi*; text on gratitude to one's parents; anonymous; 2504 [1961]; 74 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 6. *Nāthakōranatham nithān sāthok 10 kan: sadēng tham pen thīphung hai phon čhāk thukkhati thung sukkhati sawan mak phon nipphān*; Jātaka tales on Dharma and Nirvana; Mahā Pui Sāengchāi; 2504 [1961]; 88 ff.; 48 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 7. *Kām 12 nithān sāthok 12 kan: sadēng tām 'ak khathā phratraipidok fanglāo maipen mitchāthitthi maitoknarok*; text on exemplary actions; Mahā Pui Sāengchāi; 2504 [1961]; 112 ff.; 47 x 5 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 8. *Sammappathān nithān sāthok 4 kan: sadēng khwāmphān hai phon thuk pen suk thang lōk nī lōk nā*; text on diligence, suffering and how to stop suffering; Mahā Pui Sāengchāi; 2504 [1961]; 42 ff.; 46 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 9. *Phračhao prōt lōk: nithān sāthok 12 kan sadēng phutthakit khōng Phraphuttha 'ong, song tratsarū phūa yok sat, khon sat ōk čhāk watthasongsān*; Gautama Buddha's sermon after the rain retreat. Mahā Pui Sāengchāi; 2504 [1961]; 107 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 10. *Bōk lōk nī lōk nā: nithān sāthok 12 kan sadēng lōk nī lōk nā khūkan pai thuk-kan yōt sammā padibat phūsāng phūfang kuson hēng yingnak*; Sermon on right conduct and the cycle of death and rebirth; Mahā Pui Sāengchāi; 2504 [1961]; 119 ff.; 48 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 11. *Kusalakam nithān sāthok 10 kan: sadēng thāng paisū sawan makphonla nipphān hai phon čhāk 'abāi phūmi mīnarokpenton*; Jātaka stories to go to Nirvana and save oneself from hell; anonymous; 2504 [1961]; 82 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 12. *Phra kusunlakammabot traimāt thētsanā: samrap phra 'ārām lūang lē 'ārām rāt thua rāt cha 'ānāčhak sayām*; text on Buddhist rain retreat; anonymous; 2504 [1961]; 111 ff.; 47 x 5 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 13. *Bōk narok bōk sawan nithān sāthok 12 kan: thuk kan sadēng narok sawan khūkan pai, phūsāng phūfang dai bun māk*; Buddhist cosmology: heavens and hells; Mahā Pui Sāengchāi; 2528 [1985]; 81 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 14. *Bōk bun bōk bāp 12 kan: thuk kan sadēng bun bāp khūkan pai phūsāng phūfang dai bun māk*; Sermon on merit and karma; Mahā Pui Sāengchāi; 2530 [1987]; 116 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 15. *Bun kam namtēng nithān sāthok 12 kan: sāng thēnkhun māndābidā lē uthitku-son kē phuwaikhon*; Buddhist tales on merit and demerit; Mahā Pui Sāengchāi; 2530 [1987]; 87 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 16. *Hūačhai Phratraipidok 84000: sāng thēn khun mānda bidā bupphakāri phūsong phrakhun thanglāi*; Heart of the Pāli Canon and gratitude to one's parents; Mahā

- Pui Sāengchāi; 2530 [1987]; 126 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; 5 lines; in Thai
17. *Yōt katanyū katawēthi 12 kan: wāidūai khwāmkatanyū katawēthi thi but thidā mī tō mādā bidā tām lak Phra Traipidok*; text on gratitude; anonymous; 2530 [1987]; 107 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 18. *Thakkhinā chāpanakit nithān sāthok 12 kan: sadēng phalānisong kanthambun uthit kē phū wāichon yok nithān tham prakop phoēm pasath sathā kē phū fang ying nak*; text on donations for cremation and merit-making for deceased; Mahā Pui Sāengchāi; 2532 [1989]; 100 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 19. *Patčhuban kam nithān sāthok 12 kan: sāng thāen khūn mādā-bidā uthitsūankūsala khē phūwāichon khōng Mahā Pui Sāengchāi*; text on merit-making for one's parents and the deceased; Mahā Pui Sāengchāi; n.d.; 108 ff.; 46 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
 20. *Phāp phutthaprawat 32 phāp*; Thirty two illustrated postcards of the complete life of the Buddha; (illustrations) Phrathēwā Phinimmit; n.d.; 160 x 48 cm; postcards; 2 lines; in Thai

Buddhism (canonical, official)

1. *Phra Phimpā Nipphān rū Phimpā khamā Nipphān mī nithān buppakam khōng phra nāng phimpā māk mī nā fang ying nak*; Enlightenment of Yasodhara, former wife of Gautama Buddha; anonymous; 2504 [1961]; 109 ff.; 48 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
2. *Mahāparinipphān sūt noknōi: niyomsāngthothāenkhunmāndabidā lēyātikāthanglāi mīnithānrūangkhānoknōithamyāprakop phimkhuntāmsatthāprasong sāngpenphutthabūchā thambūchā sangkhabūchā*; Maha Parinipphan Sermon; anonymous; 2529 [1986]; 15 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
3. *Mahāparinipphān sūt noknōi: niyomsāngthothāenkhunmāndabidā lēyātikāthanglāi mīnithānrūangkhānoknōithamyāprakop phimkhuntāmsatthāprasong*; Maha Parinipphan Sermon; anonymous; 2529 [1986]; 15 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
4. *Phramongkhonsūt Phitsadān Thetsanā: khwām nai Phramongkhonsūt 38 prakān dōi Phitsadān phrōm thang yok watthu nithān khroptūan*; Buddha's sermon on auspiciousness; Phrakhrū Sripanya munī (ōn); 2530 [1987]; 431 ff.; 49 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines per folio; in Thai
5. *Phradīkā Phāhung Thētsanā rū Phraphuttaphōnchaiyamongkhon khāthā thētsanā sadēng thung Phraphutta'ong song chamna sat lōk lāi praphēt*; Buddha's auspicious sermon showing how the Buddha gained victory over many beings; anonymous; 2530 [1987]; 167 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; in Thai
6. *Phra'aphitham Phitsadān Thetsanā: tām 'attharot thī phraphuttha 'ong song sadēng bon dāodeung phiphop prārop sanōng prakhun somdetphraphutthamān dasirīmāhayā prom 'akharāt thēwī phutthabōrisat niyom yindī sāng sanong khun prachonka chonnī tām somdetphraphuttha'ongchao*; Abhidhammapitaka with

dialogue between Buddha and his mother; anonymous; 2530 [1987]; 613 ff.; 48 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai

7. *Thētsakān traīmāt thētsanā: mō kē thētsanā nai traīmāt lē thuk kānsamai*; Sermon on the three-month rain retreat; Phrathamma Mahā Wīrānuwat; 2530 [1987]; 78 ff.; 47 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai
8. *Phra Bunya Kiriya Watthu Trai Māt: samnūan khōng Somdet Phra Sangkharāt Wat Rāṭchaphradit sadāng nai bunya kiriya watthu 10 prakan*; Behavior and moral conduct; Somdet Phra Yānasangwara (čharoēn Khachawat); 2546 [2003]; 106 ff.; 50 x 4 cm; printed on palm leaves; 5 lines; in Thai

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